

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 03004 151553Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 VO-03 SCA-01 PPT-01 PRS-01 USIA-06
DHA-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /034 W
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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 3004

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SOPN, PFOR, CZ
SUBJECT: BOURNE VISA

REF: STATE 077994, PRAGUE 0927

1. ERIC BOURNE, MONITOR VIENNA CORRESPONDENT, HAS NOW HAD HIS MEETING WITH PRESS ATTACHE SVIC, WHO READ TO HIM WITH VISIBLE EMARRASSMENT HIS INSTRUCTIONS FROM PRAGUE REGARDING BOURNE VISA. CONDITIONS CLEARLY SPELLED OUT WERE THAT (A) HE FILE NEW APPLICATION LISTING PRECISELY HIS INTERESTS AND OFFICIAL PERSONS WITH WHOM HE WISHED TO MEET IN PRAGUE; B) HE PLEDGE NOT TO SEEK QUOTE IN ANY WAY UNQUOTE CONTACTS WITH DISSIDENTS. A BREACH OF THIS UNDERTAKING, HE WAS TOLD, MUST RESULT IN IMMEDIATE EXPULSION.

2. BOURNE GAVE SVIC A MEMO TO CZECHOSLOVAK MFA, WHICH HE HAD PREPARED IN ADVANCE. HE AGREED TO HOLD FILING COPY ON ENCOUNTER FOR 24 HOURS TO GIVE MFA CHANGE TO RESPOND. NO RESPONSE RECEIVED. TEXT OF MEMO FOLLOWS:

3. QUOTE A. SUCH A PRE-CONDITION TO GRANTING A VISA IS, I BELIEVE, QUITE WITHOUT PRECEDENT AND, IN OUR VIEW, RAISES AN ENTIRELY NEW PRINCIPLE OF WIDE IMPLICATION BEYOND THE PRESENT CASE.

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IT IS, IN FACT, THE FIRST AND ONLY TIME IN MY LONG EXPERIENCE IN WHICH ANY GOVERNMENT IN THE AREA IN WHICH I REPRESENT THIS NEWSPAPER -- OR, FOR THAT MATTER, ANY GOVERNMENT ANYWHERE, TO MY KNOWLEDGE -- HAS SOUGHT TO ATTACH SUCH CONDITION TO THE ISSUE OF A VISA.

C. I HAVE, FROM TIME TO TIME -- THOUGH NOT OFTEN IN

RECENT YEARS -- HAD DIFFICULTIES OR BEEN REFUSED A VISA. BUT NEVER BEFORE HAS ONE BEEN OFFERED ME ON CONDITION--AS NOW-- THAT I LIMIT MY PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES TO OFFICIAL, OR OFFICIALLY APPROVED, CONTACTS AND UNDERTAKE TO REFRAIN FROM CONTACTS WITH POLITICAL OR OTHER PERSONS IN OFFICIAL DISFAVOR, SUBJECT, MOREOVER, TO THREAT OF IMMEDIATE EXPULSION FOR ANY BREACH.

D. I WOULD POINT OUT ALSO IN RELATION TO THE PRESENT SPECIFIC CASE--INVOLVING CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND AN AMERICAN NEWSPAPER--THAT NO REPEAT NO CZECHOSLOVAK JOURNALIST VISITING OR POSTED IN THE UNITED STATES IS IMPEDED IN TALKING WITH ANYONE HE MIGHT WISH-- QUOTE DISSIDENTS UNQUOTE INCLUDED -- OR IN WRITING AS HE PLEASES ABOUT AMERICAN AFFAIRS (EVEN, IT MUST BE ADDED, THOUGH MUCH THAT IS WRITTEN BY CZECHOSLOVAK CORRESPONDENTS IS OFTEN HOSTILE IN THE EXTREME AND FREQUENTLY GOES BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF WHAT MIGHT BE REGARDED AS FAIR AND BALANCED REPORTING OR THE ACCURATE PRESENTATION OF THE AMERICAN SCENE AND AMERICAN STANDPOINTS.

3. SUCH A PRE-CONDITION TO THE ISSUE OF A VISA AS THAT NOW PROPOSED WOULD RENDER IT IMPOSSIBLE TO PERFORM FREELY THE PROPER FUNCTION OF A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT AND HIS DUTY TO OBSERVE, HEAR, EXAMINE AND EVALUATE ALL POINTS OF VIEW--MINORITIES INCLUDED--IN ORDER TO GIVE FULL PICTURE ETC., WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR. IT IS, THEREFORE, QUITE UNACCEPTABLE TO EITHER MYSELF OR THIS NEWSPAPER. UNQUOTE CONFIDENTIAL

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4. SVIC THEN ASKED BOURNE UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS HE WOULD QUOTE ACCEPT UNQUOTE VISA. BOURNE SAID ALL CONDITIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE WITHDRAWN, INCLUDING THREAT OF EXPULSION, AND THAT MFA WOULD HAVE TO GIVE ASSURANCES TO HIM AND EMBASSY AS TO HIS PERSONAL SECURITY. SVIC SAID HE THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE QUOTE OUT OF QUESTION UNQUOTE AND THAT HE WAS CERTAIN THE OFFICIAL POSITION WOULD NOT CHANGE.

5. AIRPOUCHING COPIES OF MONITOR EDITORIAL APRIL 6 AND OF BOURNE STORY FILED YESTERDAY. MEEHAN

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 15-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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